

Meeting Notes
North Delta Agency Team
December 4, 2001

The following provides a summary of the North Delta Agency Team Meeting held on December 4, 2001. The group agreed to meet again on **February 5, 9:30 - 11:30**, at the Resources Building, Room 133.

Attendees:

Kerry Wicker - DFG	Margit Aramburu - DPC
April Zohn - J&S	Chuck Vogelsang - CALFED
Aimee Dour-Smith - J&S	Marina Brand - DFG
Rob Cooke - CALFED	Matthew Reischman - CVRWQCB
John Thomson - USFWS	Paul Bowers - USACE
Travis Hemmen - J&S	Jeannie Blakeslee - DOC
Jeff Stuart - NMFS	Evelyne Gulle - SLC
Tony Frisbee - CALFED	Diane Jones - SLC
Patricia Fernandez - CALFED	Gwen Knittweis - DWR
Ken Trott - CDFA	Carl Werder - USBR

Members Invited but not Present:

Frank Wernette - DFG	Dennis O'Bryant - DOC
Ryan Olah - USFWS	Rosalie del Rosario - NMFS
Mike Aceituno - NMFS	Mike Coleman - CALFED
Diane Windham - NMFS	Terry Mills - CALFED
Peter Rabbon - DWR/Rec Board	Steve Shaffer - CDFA
Dennis Majors - CALFED	Rod Johnson - CALFED
Jim Starr - DFG	Bellory Fong - CALFED
Ron Ott - CALFED	Scott Cantrell - DFG

Notes:

- Paul Bowers gave an update on the status of the federal lead agency for the project. CALFED and DWR have been working with USACE to determine if USACE planning process (Feasibility Study) or USACE regulatory should assume federal lead agency status. Right now, all agencies are leaning toward USACE regulatory taking the lead, and are looking for funding sources to provide a permanent regulatory staff person who could be dedicated to the project. The advantage of having regulatory as the lead agency would be their ability to better meet the current project timeline (planning would require a feasibility study and Federal funding would need to be Federally appropriated). The disadvantage of having regulatory act as the federal lead agency would be that the project proponents would not receive project authorization when the Corps approved study and EIS is submitted to Congress. Gwen Knittweis will provide the NDAT with any additional information on the status of the lead agency at the next NDAT meeting.
- Aimee Dour-Smith provided the group with a project update.
 - The regional Hydraulic Modeling Group is reviewing information available through existing models to prepare the regional model for the project. Aimee discussed the interests of each of the members of the modeling team, including SAFCA, Sacramento County, the Corps, San Joaquin County, and CALFED/DWR. Gil Cosio and Gwen Knittweis also discussed the important role of local landowners on the modeling team. Kerry Wicker asked if the City of Galt had been brought into the hydraulic modeling group yet. Aimee will follow up with the City to determine if a representative would like to sit on the committee. Jones & Stokes is working on preparing a map of the regional hydraulic model, which will be presented at the next NDAT meeting.
 - Jones & Stokes and DWR are still working with the Delta Wide Ecosystem Restoration Committee for recommendations on North Delta ERP actions.

- The project purpose and need statement is still in a draft stage, waiting for comments/approval from the pending federal lead agency. All comments provided previously to Jones & Stokes from NDAT members have been incorporated into the "latest version". Jones & Stokes will email out this latest version for review by the new members of the NDAT who have not yet had an opportunity to review it.
- SLC asked about the timeline for the project. Aimee stated that public scoping should occur late in the spring of 2002, that the EIR/EIS should be published in 2003, and the project should be implemented in 2004.
- Members seeking additional information on the project should review the MCWA or CALFED websites (www.mcwatershed.com or www.calfed.water.ca.gov)
- The group discussed the possible funding mechanisms for the eventual implementation of the NDIP. Specifically, the group discussed the possibility of using the CALFED PSP Process to fund ERP actions for the NDIP. Not only would this open up additional funding mechanisms, but would also provide opportunities for the project proponents to involve other specialized ERP groups. ERP goals funded as directed actions may also be a possibility.
- Aimee Dour-Smith led the group in a discussion of the permitting timeline chart. Discussion comments and changes will be incorporated into a revised timeline, which will be distributed prior to the next NDAT meeting. Comments regarding the timeline included:
 - The timeline should reflect local permitting requirements (i.e. county roads, etc.)
 - The alternatives development for the NEPA/CEQA process needs to occur concurrently with the alternatives development process for the USACE 404 program - i.e., both should include considerations for the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA)
 - What is the appropriate time (relative to the EIR/EIS) for preparing and submitting the draft and final Individual Permit application to the USACE?
 - Additional information needs to be gathered on the ASIP process. Specifically:
 - Will the project proponent need to prepare additional background information on species in the project area, or will the information in the MSCS be adequate if referenced? What level of information on species accounts is available, and how much field work will be required to augment existing information?
 - Will a preferred alternative be identified in the Administrative Draft EIR/EIS? If not, how will that affect preparation of the ASIP?
 - Will the NDIP be able to prepare the ASIP on a similar timeline as the EIR/EIS? Simultaneous preparation would allow for joint public and agency review and would ensure that the EIR/EIS addresses all of the concerns and conditions outlined in the ASIP.
 - What is the end result of the ASIP process? Do the agencies issue a BO/NCCP approval for the final ASIP, or do they just "adopt" the ASIP?
 - A DFG 1600 liaison should be added to the NDAT. Kerry Wicker will follow up on who this person should be.
 - All NDAT agencies, including DFG, RWQCB and SLC, need to review the CEQA document before it goes public to ensure that the document adequately addresses their individual concerns and permitting requirements.

Action Items:

1. Jones & Stokes will contact the City of Galt to determine if they would like a representative to sit on the Hydraulic Modeling Coordination Committee.
2. Jones & Stokes will email the latest version of the purpose and need statement to the NDAT for "new member" review
3. Jones & Stokes will revise the permit timeline chart and provide for NDAT review at the next meeting
4. Kerry Wicker will follow-up with the DFG Bay Delta to determine which DFG 1600 representative should sit on the NDAT
5. John Thomson will determine what the "end result" of the ASIP process will be

Next meeting:

- Review project area/geographic scope map
- Review revised permit timeline chart
- Discuss lead agency